

Correspondence.

Evansville, May 20, 1880.

At 8:50 a. m., on Monday, May 19, we reached this beautiful city, on the Ohio river, the boundary of Indiana. Yesterday evening at 6 o'clock, after a most fatiguing and dusty ride of about 100 miles, the last one and a half of which was an exception in the way of a most delightful boat ride up the river from Henderson to Evansville.

The McMinnville delegation, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Biles, Mrs. Romeyn Mead, Mrs. B. and ourself, the traveling editor of the STANDARD, was very largely re-enforced by delegates from all parts of Tennessee and Kentucky, who had been accumulating for many days at the Nashville Central, with a view of joining the General Assembly excursion across the "great and bloody land" of Kentucky to the "great and bloody city" of Louisville, the capital of Indiana. It is usual for such parties to say that the purpose of the excursion is in a sense always true, "to see the country and the people." The Assembly, which is strictly a representative body, but it is not in conformity with either of these requirements that we say that this southern delegation was pre-eminently so, excepting always the lay representation of the McMinnville Presbytery, one half of which is absent and the other composed of a single individual.

There are to begin with five octogenarians, to-wit: Rev. J. L. Dillard, D. D., of Sparta Presbytery, 88 years of age, 67 a minister, who is to preach the semi-centennial sermon to the General Assembly, being the oldest minister of the church. Elder T. M. Moore, of Franklin, Tennessee, who is above eighty years old, accompanied by the wife of his youth, Richard Beard, the pastor of the Theological Seminary at Lebanon, now above 80 years of age, and was a teacher in the Cumberland University of Lebanon, when the school was located at Princeton, Ky., then under the name of the Cumberland College; Judge R. L. Caruthers, the pastor of the famous Law School of the Cumberland University, who is also 80, and has been a law professor in that school since its organization and as a ruling Elder now represents his Presbytery at the Semi-Centennial General Assembly. Hiram A. Hunter, of Nashville, is 80 and has been a member of the Assembly since 1834. To these five octogenarians we add the name of Samuel Lambert, of Mississippi, who is also above 80. Surely, these are not only representative men of the church to-day, but of it for fifty years and more. And to this list of venerable octogenarians we add a number of other prominent names of less age and experience among them Dr. A. J. Baird, Pastor of the first C. P. church, Nashville; Dr. T. C. Blake, late editor of the Banner of Peace, and Financial Agent of the Board of Publication, the tallest divine of the Assembly; Dr. J. R. Brown, editor of the Cumberland Presbyterian, Nashville, Tenn.; Elder Thomas McNeely, of Charlotte, formerly Senator in the Tennessee Legislature, and a large number of other ministers and Elders who are prominent in the church, the whole party numbering about seventy-five, all of whom had been previously assigned to their boarding places, and were conveyed to them with perfect system and dispatch from the boat landing.

The General Assembly was opened on Monday at 10:30, by Rev. J. S. Grier, of Bowling Green, Ky., who preached the introductory sermon. Rev. A. Templeton, of Corsicana, Texas, was elected Moderator on the first ballot. Dr. A. J. Baird and G. T. Smithback having declined the race, leaving only Dr. McGlumphy and Rev. A. Templeton candidates. After the election the Assembly adjourned till to-morrow 9 a. m. We had a very fine rain on the night of the 20th which was more needed here than in Tennessee.

CROPS.

We found Kentucky and Indiana suffering more from drought than Tennessee, but since the very copious rains of the 20th and 21st the growing crops have been very much revived and now bid fair to recover all that had been lost and yet meet the most flattering expectations.

The wheat this side of Nashville is very far superior in appearance to that south of that city. In fact the present prospect seems to justify hopes of an average crop in this State. Oats and grass have only been checked by a want of rain, but will now measurably recover.

MISSIONARY MEETING.

The General Assembly's Missionary meeting last night was addressed by Rev. Mr. Sturges of the American Board of Missions, who has been a missionary in the South West Pacific Islands for 28 years. The narrative of his experiences there was very interesting indeed. He and his party of

three families were there eight years before they saw even a sign of progress. Surely the jobs are not all dead yet! Dr. A. J. Baird, of Nashville, followed Mr. Sturges in his inimitable style, saying that he did not intend to ask any one for a cent of money, yet before he was half through voluntary contributions commenced to be handed up to him from the vast audience of seven or eight hundred people, and continued without anyone soliciting it till the amount received was about \$500, contributed by both citizens and members and visitors to the General Assembly.

The work of the Assembly is progressing slowly yet steadily and harmoniously. Commissioners are still arriving daily.

EVANSVILLE, May 24, 1880.

Yesterday was an interesting day at the Assembly. Rev. Mr. Sturges, a Missionary heretofore mentioned in this correspondence, addressed the Sunday School and exhibited the various articles of dress worn by the natives, especially the royal families. The main article, in fact almost the only garment, reminded us very much of a home-made Confederate shawl, about 2x3 yards, with a hole in the center, through which the royal head is passed, allowing the robe to fall loose around the body to which it is bound by a fancy girdle. At this point Dr. Crisman asked if they were pants, to which Mr. Sturges replied they did not, and as they depended on Boston for shoes they never got any, owing to the great distance, which is 4500 miles west of San Francisco. He stated that his church on those far distant Islands had already (at 9 o'clock a. m. here,) had their Sunday Schools and preaching, had retired to bed and were then fast asleep, it being night there much earlier than here. That during part of the year there they had to look north for the sun, and at other times the sun casts no shadow at all, being vertical so that its rays fall directly on top of one's head and makes no shadow. He repeated the Lord's prayer in the language of the natives.

Mr. Sturges made this address to about 600 persons present and to about one hundred and thirty absent, the former were sitting in the church before him and the latter were at their homes in different parts of the city listening through the medium of the Telephone, which is connected with about one hundred and fifty different houses. Some weeks ago we gave a very lengthy description of the workings of this very telephone in the STANDARD, then taken from an exchange, but now we report it from personal observation, having seen and heard it both, so we are now enabled to say "veni, vidi, vici" sum—we have seen it for ourselves and were convinced!

And the half was not told—more anon.

The Church regularly met at 10 o'clock, and in that "large" church, the African Methodist Episcopal, by members of the city press, in a most impressive manner.

The Semi-Centennial Convention rendered in goodly form, in the afternoon which consisted of a sermon by Rev. J. L. Dillard, of age and 67 in the morning, a historical sketch of the church by Dr. D. D., who is a member of the first General Assembly, a biographical sketch by Dr. Hiram A. Hunter, also an octogenarian, and a sermon by Dr. A. J. McGlumphy, President of Lincoln University, on the mission of the church in the future, representing not the past, or the aged ministry, but the present and future as well as the manhood of the present ministry of the church.

The General Assembly decided almost unanimously to hold its next meeting in the city of Austin, Texas, one year hence.

The Woman's Convention will meet this evening to organize a Woman's Board of Missions. We think this a good idea, as woman's aid is very much needed in the missionary operations abroad, and then it will tend greatly, no doubt, to keep woman out of politics to which many of the "strong minded" have had a strong inclination already.

We are having a remarkably pleasant sojourn among these high-toned hospitable people, who seem to vie with each other in seeing who can be the clearest. No Assembly was ever more cordially received or more hospitably entertained. There is only one drawback in all this our pleasure, and that is a constant and even anxious dread which has prevailed all our waking moments since we left home, that somebody would "sit down" on our Sunday hat. We have not been in a meeting anywhere, in the cars, on the boat, or in the churches but that we have had to move it out of the way of some lady's trimmings and trappings, or some gentleman's no. 10 boot. The constant dread and unending suspense are simply awful. And in all the other conveniences and improvements of this high state of luxury and civilization, there has been no place provided for the "beaver hat." There is absolutely no place of safety for it, not even on one's head, for it is more liable to knocks and cuffs than any one style of its contemporaries.

There is but one solitary gleam of comfort and consolation in all this miserable anxiety, and that arises from the questionable source, that "misery loves company," here this is abundantly supplied, for we can truly say, thanks to the fashions, most of the delegates are in the same fix with ourselves, and especially is this the case of a certain Memphis clergyman, who has recently embarked in the high hat trade, and brandishes one so new and slick that a fly would endanger his neck to light upon it. He too is in constant dread.

Harmony.

In Virginia, an agreement has been made to conduct the canvass as "solidly Democratic on Federal issues, and independent on State issues." It is an experiment that we hope will prove successful, and save that grand old commonwealth from the clutches of Republicanism, but we fear the result. The State debt question has already split the Democracy of that State into "smithereens" either faction pursuing the other on hot foot, engendering divergence and personal aversions amongst former personal and political friends! When the discussion of this exciting subject once more begins, how long will this hoped for harmony remain? It is an experiment of most doubtful results at the end of a heated canvass. Perhaps nothing better could possibly have been done there, for their State debt question is in a very different condition from ours—previous action, legislative and elective making it a direct issue which could not be excluded from the canvass. The same policy is suggested to the democracy in the canvass about beginning in Tennessee. But the question of our State debt does not of necessity press itself upon us for immediate solution. The main question of difference with us is as to what action shall be taken in reference to that branch of the State debt incurred "in aid of internal improvements," the larger half of the whole debt. As to that, it is known the holders of these bonds have used the railroad companies without impleading the State in any way—that this suit will be finally terminated only in the United States Supreme court, one, or two or more years hence, that its results may materially vary the aspect of the question which the people will be called upon to decide, and in the mean time we are not taxed one cent on account of this debt. If lugged into the present canvass it will be a firebrand, and we fear will split the democratic party from top to bottom. We repeat what we have elsewhere said, we cannot afford to let this question split us, and its solution is not one of those pressing necessities which are forced upon us.

If then the unpaid bonds of the State were legally issued the objectors to recognizing them as a debt are left without an argument. The whole controversy narrows itself down to this point. Surely the Democratic party of Tennessee will not split into hostile factions on a mere question of law. We ought to be able to get at the law of the case without a quarrel, by which the Republicans may thrash us. M.

We are informed that the leading editorial in last week's issue under the heading, "The past the great teacher" has given offence to some of our Republican friends. Surely this is a mistake. It pointed out the great danger to the whole people North and South, of letting demagogues instead of statesmen control public offices. The mere fact that the demagogues mentioned in the article were bloody shirt republicans does not alter the case. No matter where they come from or to what party they belong they are, and always will be dangerous to liberty. History will write it down that instead of declaring the war over, the union restored, peace universal, and administering the government from this stand point as true statesmanship would have prompted, the selfish politicians then in power threw away a grand opportunity to reunite our people and strengthen the bonds by which our institutions are to be made perpetual. M.

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" Decherd, 1.55 " 11.55 " "
" Tallahoma, 2.15 " 12.30 a. m.
" Vardance, 2.45 " 1.05 " "
" Murfreesboro, 3.45 " 2.15 " "
Arr. Nashville, 4.40 " 4.00 " "
Leav. Nashville, 5.10 " 6.00 " "
Arr. McKenzie, 11.10 " 11.40 " "
" Martin, 11.30 " 12.15 p. m.
" Union City, 4.30 a. m. 6.55 " "
" Memphis, 5.00 p. m. 5.10 a. m.
" St. Louis, 5.25 " 6.15 " "

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feature of making their...
receivable for taxes, thereby...
to borrow money to pay...
expenses of the State govern-...
ment, as was done in Virginia...
to the possible overthrow of the Dem-...
ocratic party, and the handing over of...
that old commonwealth to the tender...
mercies of the Republicans.

The second phase is represented by a...
large portion of our party calling them-...
selves low tax Democrats, who deny...
the power of the Legislature to direct...
the issuance of bonds, assert all of them...
are void, and strangely enough wish to...
pay off the Hermitage, Capitol and...
some other bonds in full, but exclude...
from settlement every bond issued...
for internal improvements. At present...
a very large part of the Democratic...
party seem to occupy this position...
and in some of the counties have de-...
clared in mass meeting that they will...
never pay one dollar of such portion of...
the State debt.

The third phase of the question is...
sustained mainly by a very large por-...
tion of the Democratic party. It is...
that the bonded debt of the State...
should have been settled by new bonds...
at 50 cents on the dollar for the old...
(leaving off accrued interest), and pay-...
ing on these bonds 4 per cent. interest...
Such terms of compromise have already...
been accepted by a larger number in...
amount of the holders of our bonds...
than demanded 60-6, as we are in-...
formed officially by the proclamation...
of the Governor. The class of Demo-...
crats in favor of settlement by com-...
promise are unalterably opposed to recog-...
nizing as obligatory any pretended bond...
which is tainted by legal fraud or which...
is issued by legislative authority, and...
which may have been stolen from...
the State, but are as firmly resolved...
by word or vote to repudiate any...
issued by Tennessee not objectionable...
to objections. They are of the fact...
that a large number of our...
and from the...
own Legislature...
during this period not only...
approved, but overwhelmingly demanded...
the Legislature to grant "State aid"...
to turnpikes and railroads. That all...
look place under the Constitution...
1834; that the Legislature is but...
one of the agencies through which a...
State must not; that the Supreme...
Court is the authoritative exponent of...
the law, its decisions, conclusive and...
binding, and they bow to its announce-...
ments. Said that court:

"The question then is whether the...
State is bound by its agents as a nat-...
ural person acting through agents is...
bound. The truth is a government...
can only act through its agents, and all...
its officers, executive, legislative, judi-...
cial and ministerial are merely agents...
To assume therefore that it is not bound...
by the acts of its agents is to deny its...
capacity to create an obligation. But...
this will be denied by no one." State...
vs. Jeff. Turpike Co., 3 Humphreys...
311.

This doctrine is re-affirmed in State...
vs. Hamilton, 11th Humphreys 49,
and State vs. Castelar, 2d Swann, 504.
In a more recent case the Supreme...
Court, said: "The Constitution of 1834...
declared that a well-regulated system of...
internal improvements should be en-...
couraged, and for such purposes the...
Legislature has often appropriated the...
revenues of the State and loaned the...
credit of the State to the extent of im-...
mense sums. The power to do this has never...
been questioned." Knoxville and Ohio...
R. R. Co. vs. Hicks, Sept. term, 1877.

Stephen J. Field is not without friends...
to support him in his Presidential ap-...
pointment.